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Human Souls



hell

adventure

monsters

54 2 6

Chapter 1 by Brendan Parker

Mercer was only nine years old when they took him. They'd entered his room in the dead of night, through an interdimensional splinter inside of his closet. That was how the shadow men captured most of their slaves, through momentary interdimensional overlaps. The stick like men had dragged him from his bed, kicking and screaming, through the crack in space-time, and into the Boneyard, a.k.a. what most humans would call "Hell."

In reality it is a chain of nine dimensions, strung together, inhabited by the vilest beings imaginable. It is said that the farther down the chain you go, the more grotesquely horrifying the inhabitants of each realm are. It is also said that, deep in the furthest ring, is the only hope of ever escaping the Boneyard for good, as once your body fully adapts to survival in the Boneyard, staying in any other dimension for more than a few seconds kills you.

Once Mercer had been a scared little boy, quivering at the sight of any creature that passed him on the tar coated streets of the ninth ring. But no longer. As he stood in front of his master's desk on his seventeenth birthday and slammed down the pouch of soul crystals that he had amassed to buy his freedom, his eyes were filled with the fire of one who had absolutely nothing to lose. His master, an arachnid like creature with ears where his eyes should be and eyes

everywhere else, glared at him with a hundred angry red eyes. "Where will you go?" He spluttered, his mandibles clicking.

The scars on Mercer's face twisted as he glared. He didn't answer though, he just turned and walked out of the room. If he had never crawled out of the black sludge that had birthed it, his

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Chapter 2 by Charles Lives



Before he could answer the creature just told him, "it doesn't matter--you don't fit anywhere, might as well just continue the harvest, i'll give you one opportunity." While it was talking Mercer just left the cubicle of darkness surrounded by astral webs that used to be the nature of his nightmares. Voices speaking to him in multiple tongues, he was already used to it--and he will not feel it again.

He took out the collar of ethereal matter that had him prisoner all this time and threw himself into the pit of quintessence, but for first time it threw him upwards, instead of downwards--at that moment Mercer remembered the first time he was thrown into this endless hole, he couldn't even distinguish any direction, and the foul spirits, always the foul spirits glaring and mocking.

He has spent all this time creating relationships, passing as part of this underworld--to be able to gather the required information, he cheated the system, one of the few who had done it, he knew they were going to come back for him, he will be ready. He crossed the seven portals of redemption, he bribed each of its guardians with a soul of a particular sentient being in the multiverse, he has prepared for long for this, but--was he still a human being? after all the horrible amoral acts he has made? it didn't matter anymore, it is all for this cause--he will come back to his land and finish this dirty soul business, the greater good.

Write a draft for chapter 3 of 8

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